

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-18

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DRAFTED BY AF/C:COHEN:OSM

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R 052150Z APR 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 069507

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, CF

SUBJECT: NORMALIZATION US-CONGO RELATIONS

1. GERMAN EMBASSY WASHINGTON HAS PROVIDED DEPT WITH COPY OF MEMCON BETWEEN GERMAN AMBASSADOR TO BRAZZAVILLE AND CONGOLESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SECRETARY GENERAL BOUNKOULOU. CONVERSATION TOOK PLACE ON FEB. 18, 1974. BOUNKOULOU TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT CONGOLESE GOVT IS READY TO NEGOTIATE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH USG WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS. BOUNKOULOU ALSO SAID THAT IDEOLOGICAL BARRIERS CAUSED BY VIETNAM WAR ALMOST COMPLETELY ELIMINATED, AND THAT CONGO INTERESTED IN PRAGMATIC FOREIGN POLICY BETWEEN SOVEREIGN STATES.
 2. DEPT HAS FOLLOWED UP ON PREVIOUS INITIATIVES OF THIS TYPE DURING PAST THREE YEARS ONLY TO DISCOVER THAT INNER CORE OF CONGOLESE POWER STRUCTURE FELT THAT INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION RENDERED NORMALIZATION INOPPORTUNE. MOST RECENT EXCHANGES HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED THROUGH GOOD OFFICES OF GABONESE PRESIDENT BONGO.
 3. EXPERIENCES DESCRIBED PREVIOUS PARAGRAPH NOTWITHSTANDING, DEPT FEELS BOUNKOULOU'S STATEMENT TO GERMAN AMBASSADOR
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MERITS LOW KEY FOLLOW-UP. LAST EXCHANGE ON THIS SUBJECT

TOOK PLACE ABOUT A YEAR AGO, AND INTERNAL CONGOLESE

POLITICAL IMPERATIVES MAY NO LONGER BE OVERRIDING.
IN ADDITION, BOUNKOULOU'S STATEMENT REPRESENT FIRST
APPROACH THROUGH USG'S PROTECTING POWER IN BRAZZAVILLE.

4. IN VIEW OF FOREGOING, DEPT WOULD BE APPRECIATIVE
IF FRG FOREIGN MINISTRY WOULD SEND INSTRUCTIONS TO THEIR
AMBASSADOR IN BRAZZAVILLE TO RETURN TO BOUNKOULOU AND
INFORM HIM THAT USG PREPARED TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS ON
POSSIBLE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITHOUT ANY PRE-
CONDITIONS. TOWARD THIS END, WE ARE PREPARED TO SEND
REPRESENTATIVE TO BRAZZAVILLE AT A TIME OF MUTUAL
CONVENIENCE. IF CONGOLESE GOVT WOULD PREFER ANOTHER
VENUE, USG WOULD BE HAPPY TO CONSIDER ANY REASONABLE
SUGGESTION. FRG AMBASSADOR SHOULD ALSO BE AUTHORIZED
TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL FOR NEGOTIATIONS IN NOTE VERBALE OR
AIDE MEMOIRE IF HE FEELS IT WOULD BE USEFUL. RUSH

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